

wherein the underdrain block is jointless and has a longitudinal length of at least five feet.

REMARKS

By the subject amendment, Applicants have cancelled Claims 1 to 5, 8 to 17 and 20 to 27 without prejudice and amended Claims 6 and 7. Accordingly, Claims 6,7, 18, 19 and 28 are presently pending herein. Claims 6, 7, 18 and 28 are presented in independent form.

Claims 18 and 19 have been allowed.

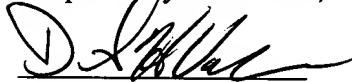
Claims 6, 7 and 28 have been rejected under 35 USC 103 as being unpatentable over Brown et al. ('388) in view of Roberts ('765) or Berkebile ('627). Applicants respectfully traverse this ground of rejection. This ground of rejection is identical to the rejection the Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences reversed in the decision dated January 27, 2003. (See Board of Patent Appeals and Interferences dated January 27, 2003, pp. 10 and 11) Accordingly, Claims 6,7 and 28 are patentable over the prior art of record including the references relied upon by the Examiner in the Official Action dated July 7, 2003.

It is believed that the subject patent application is in condition for allowance. Applicants, therefore, request that the subject patent application be passed to issuance without delay.

It is believed that no additional fee is due. Should that determination be incorrect, however, the Commissioner is further authorized to charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 13-2759 and notify the undersigned in due course.

Date: 12/01/03

Respectfully submitted,



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